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# Watching and Waiting

LIGHT FOR PERILOUS TIMES

SCRIPTURAL

Reformed, Protestant, Puritan, Prophetical, Expository, Doctrinal

## CONFERENCE SUPPLEMENT

The objects are:

1. To teach the nearing approach of our Lord's return. James 5:8
2. To hold forth the Truth and to expose and resist error. Jude 3
3. To note passing events in the light of 'the Scripture of Truth.' 2 Peter 1:19
4. To unfold the Word of God by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Acts 17:11
5. To encourage missionary endeavour, and all service for Truth. Acts 1:8
6. To comfort and strengthen those who seek to stand with the Lord, apart from abounding lawlessness. 2 Timothy 2:19
7. To call for separation from false ecumenism. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

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### SOVEREIGN GRACE ADVENT TESTIMONY

**Spring Conference, 28th April, 2023**

**Theme for 2023:  
The Prophecy of Zechariah**

**Afternoon Meeting:  
The Candlestick (chapter 4)**

**Evening Meeting:  
The Flying Roll and the Ephah (chapter 5)**

**Summaries of Sermons preached by Rev Brian McClung**

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Website: [WWW.SGAT.ORG](http://WWW.SGAT.ORG)

Secretary: Stephen A Toms 1 Donald Way Chelmsford Essex CM2 9JB

(Tel: 01245 268815. E-mail: [satoms@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:satoms@hotmail.co.uk))

(Registered Charity No. 261489)

## The Candlestick

We come to Zechariah 4 and think about the vision of the candlestick and the olive trees set before us in this particular chapter of the Word of God. This is the manner in which the Lord chose to speak to Zechariah. Zechariah, in turn, was to speak to those of his own generation – and also to you and me, because these words are recorded for us in the Scriptures and they come down to us for our benefit and admonition.

Concerning these visions that are found at the beginning of the Book of Zechariah, the question may be asked, ‘Why does the Lord not just speak in clear and simple terms?’ Well, the Lord has His reasons for speaking by visions. It certainly stirs up a spirit of study and that is something that ought to be found in every Christian. We ought to search out these things. The Lord was going to awaken the attention of His people by setting forth His Word in these particular ways; and He was going to encourage in their minds a humble reverence for His Word.

We have the great privilege of having the Word of God written before us. That was not the case with those who were listening to Zechariah, so the Lord put it into vision form as a means of making it stay in their memory, enabling them to be able to retain it. So there are reasons why the Lord sets forth His truth in this particular way.

The vision should certainly be considered with the words of chapter 1:13 in mind, where it says, ‘The LORD answered the angel that talked with me with good words and comfortable words.’ When we think about the candlestick we certainly want to look at it in that particular way. These are good words, comfortable words, encouraging words.

The Lord was setting something out for the comfort of His people, a people that had come back from captivity and then had known discouragement over those years when nothing was being done towards the building of the temple.

There was much enthusiasm when they returned. The fact that they had been given permission to rebuild the temple meant that it all started with great enthusiasm; but it was not too long before opposition arose and very soon the work had to stop; and only the foundations had been laid. That went on for a period of time. Nothing at all was being done regarding the Lord’s House. The people were concentrating on their own homes, as we know from Haggai. The challenge went out to those dwelling in their cielel houses whilst the Lord’s House had just the bare foundation with nothing taking place.

From a spirit of great enthusiasm with which they started, they descended into lethargy, and even discouragement. The prophet Zechariah, along with his contemporary, Haggai, was sent by the Lord to stir up the people, to focus them again upon what was important for them to do and to encourage them to press on with the work. So, they were good words and they were most certainly comfortable words.

As we come to chapter 4 and the vision of the candlestick, you will notice that it is connected with Zerubbabel. His name appears a number of times through this chapter – in verses 6, 7, 9 and 10, you will find reference to Zerubbabel by name. It is important to take note of that, and also to remember that in the previous chapter (chapter 3), Joshua, was mentioned. The Lord had something to say to both these men. They were very much to the fore in the work of God in those times, having a place of

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leadership, and being an example, speaking to the people, and getting involved in the work. What the Lord had to say to Joshua was considered last time at the meeting. Today, we are thinking about Zerubbabel. The two visions complement each other in many ways. The Lord was saying something about Joshua; now He is directing His words particularly to Zerubbabel; and we want to consider what the Lord had to say.

In this vision there are three things that occur. There is (1) a description of some things that are given; there is (2) an inquiry by the prophet Zechariah as to the meaning of these things; and then there is (3) an explanation given by the angel. So, there are a few simple steps that we can follow as we think about this vision and how we are to understand it.

### **The Description of what Zechariah saw**

With regard to chapter 4, you will notice first of all the description of what Zechariah saw after he had been awakened out of his sleep. He is caused to look and the question is asked of him (in verse 2), 'What seest thou?' His reply is, 'I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof; and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.'

When we think about the candlestick, our thoughts immediately go back to the tabernacle and the temple. However, there are some slight modifications in what Zechariah saw. He did not see things exactly as they were given in Exodus, and then subsequently to David in the plan of the temple which was to be built by Solomon.

There are three significant modifications. First of all, it tells us that this candlestick that Zechariah saw had a bowl at the top of it, which served as a reservoir for storing the oil. From that reservoir of oil, there was transported down (by gravity, it would seem) to these seven lamps of the candlestick. Thus the first thing that is different is that there is a bowl at the top of it, used as a reservoir.

The second difference was that the candlestick and the lampstand had seven pipes connected to the seven lamps through which the oil flowed. So, there is something here that is unique. The marginal reference against this particular verse says, 'seven several pipes to the lamps.' That suggests that there were seven pipes going to each of the seven lamps. If that is so, there would be a fullness of oil flowing to each of these lamps. That would enable them to burn brightly. In fact, there is a little phrase in the original that 'seven sevens' is actually what is given to us in these words. So, my understanding is that there was a total of forty-nine conduits that were actually supplying this lampstand.

That is very different from the lampstand in the tabernacle, or the temple. So, with seven pipes coming down to each lamp and seven lamps, there would have been forty-nine conduits flooding oil into this lampstand in order that it should burn brightly. It would burn with a brightness that had not been seen before. That will give us something of an insight into what is referred to and what it is symbolizing.

The third difference is the reference to the two olive trees (verse 3), one on the right side and the other on the left side. It tells us that each had a tap. Verse 12 says, 'I answered again, and said unto Him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?' So, these two olive trees had a tap each and they were flooding the oil into those bowls that were at the top of

each lamp. All this symbolizes that this oil was coming in abundance into the candlestick which was going to burn brightly.

It tells us in Leviticus 24 regarding the lampstand in the tabernacle that it was filled and looked after manually by the priests. The priests had to prepare the oil and come in and attend to the lampstand and maintain it so that it never would go out at any time. However, there was something different suggested in this vision. This particular candlestick appears to be constructed in a way that suggests that it did not require human agency to sustain it. The priests' ministry in the tabernacle was very important.

They were directed, as part of their work, to go in daily and make sure that they trimmed the lamp and that it had sufficient oil.

There is something remarkable here, which is a point of emphasis that we ought to be considering. Zechariah inquired as to the meaning of what he saw. We read in verse 4 that he said to the angel, 'What are these, my Lord?' This is a reminder that it is good to ask the Lord for insights. It is absolutely necessary to ask the Lord for insights into His Word. There are many things we do not understand. We do not know everything about the Word of God. How could we when we are only finite creatures? The Lord is infinite and, in His mercy and condescension, He has revealed to us many things in His Word; but there are things that we miss, things that we do not understand, things that we do not see clearly. We need to ask the Lord for insight.

We do well to have the spirit found here in Zechariah, when he said to the angel that talked with him, 'What are these, my Lord?' The words, 'My Lord' suggest that we should take the humble place. The prophet was not in any way exalting himself, but rather he was taking the humble place, acknowledging there were things he did not understand.

He saw what had been shown to him and was able to relate the particular details of the candlestick and all the things that he had observed; but he acknowledged that he did not understand, so asked the Lord to teach him.

That is a very necessary spirit for us all to have. Again, it is absolutely essential in every child of God that we have that humble spirit whereby we inquire of the Lord. I am reminded of those words in Isaiah 45:11, 'Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask Me of things to come concerning My sons, and concerning the work of My hands, command ye Me.' I particularly emphasize the phrase, 'Ask Me of things to come concerning My sons.'

When we think about the ministry of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony and what the Lord has said about future times, we can think of that scripture in Isaiah, where God is telling us to ask Him. We should remember the example of Zechariah and ask the Lord, 'What do these things mean? Give us insight, give us understanding.' We do well to take the humble place and say, 'Lord, I have read and taken note of the details, but I do not understand what is being said.' Then, the Lord will certainly teach us and instruct us.

You will notice from verse 5 that the angel replied, 'Knowest thou not what these be?'

That brings us on to another particular point of application. It suggests that the Lord was saying to Zechariah that he should have known some of these things. It is one thing to inquire, but then maybe the Lord was saying, 'You are a priest and a prophet, should you not know?' He certainly should have known some of these things because they

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were represented in the tabernacle – the lampstand (candlestick) that was there. Could the Lord come to us and say that we should know that there are things of which we should be aware?

Maybe we have been saved long enough and we have the Word of God so that there are some things which we ought to know and should have learned before now; and we have to confess that we have been negligent in some way and we have not given heed to God's Word in the way we ought, nor sought out things the way we should have done.

That is certainly true with regard to those matters about the coming of the Lord. There are many Christians and they do not know. There are many preachers too, and they do not know. They avoid preaching on subjects like this because they do not know. It could be the Lord might come to either a Christian or a preacher and say (as He did to Zechariah), 'Knowest thou not what these things be?' There are some things we ought to know. There are certainly things that we do not know and we see through a glass darkly in many ways but there may be other things about which the Lord could say, 'You ought to know. You are long enough saved. You have had your Bible. You have been able to read it. You have it in your mother tongue. These are things that are revealed in the Word of God.'

It is sad when people do not have an interest in the Word of God; and Christians are sometimes slack in reading the Bible. I think it could be said that people do not read as much as they once did. They have a much shorter attention span and a lower reading age than ever before. It is amazing how low the reading age is. It is difficult to get an adult to read, never mind a child or a young person. Sadly, we live in a time when there is not the reading of the Word of God as once there was, so maybe the Lord would, in this day and age, have good reason to say, 'You ought to know these things. They are in the Word of God.' We ought to give time and effort and regard to these things.

Zechariah was asked if he did know these things and he had to be honest and say, 'No.' At least he was honest. He confessed that he did not know, he did not understand what had been represented.

### Application to Zerubbabel

That brings us to Zerubbabel. Verse 6 is the first verse that mentions Zerubbabel by name. He was the governor, and he came from the royal tribe. He is the one who is mentioned here, as the Lord begins to teach him and show him what this vision is about.

We have spoken of Joshua who is mentioned in the previous chapter. These two chapters complement one another. Now we are thinking about Zerubbabel in this particular place because it was under his hand that this rebuilding project was going to be conducted. It was stalled for a time. There are some words that are given in verse 6 to encourage Zerubbabel. He is reminded first of all that it is 'not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.' That is the first thing of which he is reminded.

How is this work going to be carried on? Remember Zechariah's ministry and Haggai's ministry was designed to stir up the people and get them back to the building, so that the temple would be completed. It was rubble, but the Lord was stating that it would not be by their might the work would be done. I take the thought there of 'might' to refer to military strength, and 'power' to be human cunning, craft, ingenuity. It is not

going to be either of those. It is not going to be by might or power, not by that of the Medes and Persians, even though they had permitted them to start rebuilding. That is not how the temple was going to be rebuilt and completed.

It is not going to be by human power in any way, but it is going to be by the Spirit of the Lord. The Lord is going to bring this about. So the angel of the Lord was assuring Zerubbabel that the work that was presently going on was not being carried out by human means. That is not how it is going to be advanced. The people were engaged in it, as we know. That is part of the ministry of Zechariah and Haggai. They were to stir up the people in order to get them involved in the work again; but it is going to be accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit who was there among them. Look at Haggai 2:5, 'According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remaineth among you, fear ye not.'

So Haggai had that ministry and he was reminding them that the Spirit of the Lord was still among them. Now, Zechariah is taking up the same theme. He is given this message from the Lord that he is to deliver unto Zerubbabel, 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit.' It will be the work of the Spirit. When we think about the oil in this chapter, we know that the oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. So when there is so much oil coming from these olive trees into the candlestick, we are not surprised that there is going to be a reference in the chapter to the Holy Spirit, because the oil symbolizes the Holy Spirit and His work. Therefore, at the very beginning of this explanation to Zechariah that he was going to pass on to Zerubbabel, there is a reference to the Spirit; that it will be by the help of the Spirit.

How do we do anything for God? It is not by our power. It is by the Spirit of the Lord. The Lord must be in it, and if the Lord is in it, then it will fulfil what the Lord intends to accomplish; and if the Lord is not in it, you may have all the resources that you could turn to, and even of all the people involved that you could want, and yet it will come to nothing.

There is a little chorus, 'Little is much when God is in it.' That is true. If God is in something it will go somewhere and if God is not in it, it does not matter what else it has, it will go nowhere because it is not of the Lord. That was very true of that building work that they were to re-commence. If the Lord was in it, it was going to be accomplished. Therefore, there is the reminder here directed towards the revival that that work of re-building and bringing back that place of worship for the people of God in Old Testament times is going to be a Divine work. The angel indicates to Zechariah that all those would-be adversaries are not going to be successful in their attempts to stop it this time. They did stop the work earlier, as we know. After Zerubbabel returned there was a long period when the work was stopped and it was only beginning now again, through the ministry of Haggai and Zechariah.

This time it is not going to be stopped. Go on to verse 7, 'Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and He shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.' The reference there is to a great mountain. In the prophetic scriptures, 'mountain' often symbolized governmental power. The Lord was conveying this message to Zerubbabel, that the governmental power of the day, which was that of the Medes and the Persians, would not hinder this work or close it down. That is the assurance that the Lord gave.

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Previously, there were those who complained in Jerusalem and they made representation to the Medes and Persians. Search was made and the edict went out that the work was to stop. Now, this assurance was being given to Zerubbabel, the Lord will see to it that it will not happen this time.

These things have a further bearing to future times as well and we will pick up on some of this in a moment or two. We are thinking here about what is specifically said and directed towards Zerubbabel as the angel of the Lord began to explain to Zechariah what it was that he was seeing and what the Lord was going to do.

Two great mountains mentioned in the Word of God are Mount Sinai and Mount Zion. It was from Mount Sinai that the Lord descended and legislated for Israel. Mount Zion, as mentioned in the Psalms and in the Prophets, is going to be the seat of authority and the rule of Christ in a future day. It will be the place of governmental authority. The mountain is associated with that.

So, whatever opposition would arise, even at governmental level, nothing would be able to hinder Zerubbabel and the work. The Lord was going to be in it this time and it would be carried on to completion. Every obstacle to the work of this rebuilding was going to be removed; and Zerubbabel would get to the place where the headstone would be put on the temple; and there was going to be this great shout go up, 'Grace, grace, unto it.' This is a testimony that it was the Lord's doing. The final piece is the headstone, or capstone. When we refer to a building being finished and formally completed, we might talk about a capstone but it is the same thing that is mentioned in verse 7 as a headstone. It is the final piece of the building. In the upper echelons of the building it was going to be completed and here is the testimony that was going to be raised when that happened with the temple. 'Grace, grace unto it.' It is all of grace, it is all of God.

The Christian certainly is someone who can always utter those words. What other words could we utter for what the Lord has done? We are not worthy, nor have we done anything to save ourselves. It is all of the Lord and therefore the testimony is indeed of grace. When we think about that spiritual house that is mentioned in the New Testament, that habitation of God, that believers are living stones built into that particular edifice, the cry can go up, 'Grace, grace.'

We are in Christ today because of grace; there is no other reason. It is not because we deserved it or earned it or merited it, not because we were more inclined to believe than someone else. None of those things are true. Our heart was as dead as any; we were blind; we were full of enmity against God as much as any. The only difference is the grace of God. Individuals may sit beside each other under the sound of the gospel, in Sabbath school or Bible classes, in Lord's Day services. They can hear the same message and be taught the same things and one is saved and going on with God whilst others are out in the world. It is the grace of God that makes the difference. That is the only explanation. That ought to humble us. We know that little phrase, 'There go I but for the grace of God.' It is true, and it humbles the Christian to think of it. It is all grace.

I am no better than anyone else, so I can identify with the cry that went up here (in verse 7), this testimony that was to be raised when that building was finished. It was all of grace.



That will indeed be the theme of praise for the Saviour in time to come when we are gathered home to be with Him. It is all of sovereign grace.

Then there is a further message that is given here to the prophet to pass on to Zerubbabel. Verses 8, 9 and 10, 'Moreover the Word of the LORD came unto me, saying ...' This further word of assurance is given to encourage him for the work in which he is to be involved. He has to be convinced. How could he ever convince the people whom he wants to work under him if he is not convinced in his own mind? How important that was!

We need to know in our own minds. How can we witness for Christ if we are not sure of these things ourselves? We need to be sure.

The Lord would have Zerubbabel to be sure of these things so that he can speak to those who are labouring under him. So, they are designed to encourage him; but they are also designed to silence the sceptics against the day of small things. In verse 9 it says, 'The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts has sent me unto you.' So, there is the word of encouragement unto Zerubbabel himself.

Then verse 10, 'For who hath despised the day of small things?' There were those who despised it. They looked around and saw the foundation laid out and they said that it was not like the great magnificent temple in Solomon's time. Some of the older men were weeping because it was not like that they knew before. Younger ones were weeping because they had never seen anything like this at all. The challenge was given, 'Who hath despised the day of small things?' The Lord was uttering words that had an application. There were those that despised the day of small things.

There is always a tendency to do that in God's work. Some people are only interested in the large crowd, the large church. They are inclined to follow after that because they can get lost in the crowd and do not have to do very much, whereas if they are in a small work, then they have to throw their lot in and get involved and play their part. The Lord implies that we are not to despise the day of small things. The Lord was in it. The Lord was with Zerubbabel and it might look as if it was a small thing, but there was something even about that temple that was being built in Zechariah's time by Zerubbabel that was going to be magnificent.

Haggai uttered the promise that the Desire of all nations would come. The Lord was going to be in that second temple. So why despise the day of small things? It was true that the temple was not going to reflect the magnificence of Solomon's day, but the Lord had a purpose and He was in it. May we not be discouraged in the day of small things. I suppose there is a tendency within us to say we would like something different, something better. We would like to have lived in days when there was far greater interest and far more attendance to the things of God and the house of God. Well, the Lord has not called us to live in such times. There were believers who were given that privilege, but we have not.

We are called to labour today in these times in which the Lord has put us. If it is a day of small things, let us be faithful in small things and look to the Lord to bring about a change. Here, the Lord was encouraging Zerubbabel in such a way that there was the promise that he would finish the work. The plummet was to be in his hands. He is going to be involved in all this and the capstone was to go on it and it would to be



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finished. The Lord was going to have His eye upon it all along. It finishes in verse 10, where it speaks about the plummet in the hand with 'those seven, they are the eyes of the LORD which run to and fro through the whole earth.' The Lord was in it, sovereignly watching over it. The seven eyes of the Lord are a suggestion of His omniscient knowledge of all things. I said, 'Little is much when God is in it.' It is more important to have the Lord than anything else.

If you have the Lord even in a day of small things, you have all you need. He is all you need. You could have vast numbers and yet not have the Lord. What have you? You have nothing. It will all just fade away and disappear; but if you have the Lord even in a day of small things, then something will be accomplished. That is one particular thought that comes out of these words to Zerubbabel.

There is a work that Zerubbabel had been given to do and, by the Lord's help, he was to see it through to the end and the work would be done. What better commendation could there be than that? There is a greater One than Zerubbabel who finished the work that was given Him to do and that is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His work may well have been looked upon at the beginning as a small work, a day of small things. When He was arrested and put to death, He did not have very many disciples. Many of them that followed Him had forsaken Him. He had just a little company, a little handful at the end; but it was the harbinger of far greater things that were yet to come.

So let us stay the course and be faithful in our day, knowing that if it is a work given to us by the Lord, we then look to heaven for strength to finish our course and look to the Lord to use what we have done.

### Application of this Vision to the End Times

That brings us then to the last few verses of this particular chapter and I want to think about the application of this vision to the end times. You will notice, in verse 11, that Zechariah asks a further question, 'What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof?' So Zechariah has not had an explanation that satisfied him yet as to what these were. There are other matters that he has been thinking about – how the Lord is going to be among them, and so on. The Spirit of God is going to be among them but Zechariah has not had his curiosity satisfied enough with regard to these. So he asks the angel the question, 'What are these?' His inquiry was repeated, in verse 12. 'What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?' So there is a double inquiry made by Zechariah. That brings us to think about an application that goes beyond Zerubbabel's time; because this book teaches that there is a connection with Israel at that time, and also with the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Go back to chapter 1:17, where it tells us, 'The LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.'

This is taking us on into the future because, as we know, there was going to be a scattering of them for a time but the Lord says He is going to choose them again and comfort them. Zechariah 2:12-13, 'The LORD shall inherit Judah His portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again. Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for He is raised up out of His holy habitation.' So there is a time when the Lord will inherit Judah as His portion in the holy land, a holy city, a holy people. Chapter 3:9, 'For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes:

behold I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.'

It has never happened as yet, but it will in one day. 'In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree' (3:10). So there are these little indications along the way that there is something, in the future still, that the Lord is going to do with this people. There is an application for the times of Zechariah, Joshua, and Zerubbabel, but there are also these pointers into a future time and that is what we are thinking about here as we come down to the end of this particular chapter. The two olive trees that are associated with the candlestick are pouring in oil, and this brings us back to the thought that I was mentioning a little while ago about a fullness. The oil represents the Holy Spirit so we are thinking about a time of fullness when the Spirit of God is going to be in those represented by the two olive trees. They could represent those two individuals that we have thought about in these two chapters, Joshua and Zerubbabel; but they prefigure the Messiah in all His glory.

In Zechariah 6:13, it says, 'Even He shall build the temple of the LORD; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.' That speaks about the One who is going to sit and rule upon the throne, and be a priest upon the throne. The two offices are brought together. Joshua was the high priest, Zerubbabel was the civic leader. There is One who is going to sit upon the throne as a priest, a kingly priest, and that is Jesus Christ. So Joshua and Zerubbabel and these two chapters that deal with these men are foreshadowing Christ in all His Messianic fullness.

Then there is this thought about the candlestick. It was originally in the temple symbolizing Christ as a light; taken as a symbol of the people of Israel as well. The Menorah was the historic symbol of Israel long before the Star of David ever was associated with the Jews. The Menorah was taken to be a representative of the nation.

They have never really shone as a light in the world, but one day they will and they will do it in all the fullness of the Spirit of God. That is what is being set before us here.

Whatever the application to Zerubbabel, there is that which takes us into the future and what the Lord is yet going to do, in a day of fullness that is coming amongst them. The Lord is going to make them to shine as a light. The Spirit of God is going to be poured out upon them in abundance and they will shine for God and Christ in the world as they have never shone before.

We can think of that candlestick like that. Isaiah 42:6, 'I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles.' One day, the Lord is going to give them as a light to the Gentiles, as a holy people. Zechariah 8:3, 'Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts, the holy mountain.' There is going to be a time of fullness when the Lord will come among them and work among them by His Holy Spirit. There are many verses in the prophets which bring out that particular thought. We started off thinking about this abundance of oil and those various conduits that were bringing oil into these seven lamps. There is a fullness of oil and there is a day coming when the fullness of the Spirit will be among the people of God of ancient time.

I turn you to some texts of Scripture. Isaiah 32:15, 'Until the Spirit be poured upon

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us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.' That is not going to happen 'until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high.'

Isaiah 44:3, 'I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring,' again foreshadowing the day of great outpouring of the Spirit of God.

Isaiah 59:21, 'As for Me, this is My covenant with them, saith the LORD: My Spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.'

Joel 2:28, 'It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.'

So there is a time of outpouring, a time of fullness that is coming. As a result of this fullness of the Spirit of God coming upon them and the work that the Spirit of God is going to do among them, they are going to shine as a light, like they have never shone before in the world – a light for truth. We go to Zechariah 8:3, where it says, 'I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts, the holy mountain.' That will come about by the Spirit of the Lord being poured out in abundance, and the work that the Spirit of God is going to do among them. He is going to make Israel to shine. They are going to be a city of truth. They are going to be a light. The holy mountain is going to be a light – a light among the world. There are some psalms and prophets that give us that suggestion about the light. Psalm 67 says, 'GOD be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us, that Thy way be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations.' We know that has never happened. God's way will not be known upon the earth His saving health will not be fully known among all the nations until He pours out His Spirit upon His ancient people and they shine as that light.

I finish with Isaiah 60:1 where it says, 'Arise, shine; for thy light is come.' The Spirit of God will come upon them and enlighten their heart. He is going to take the veil from off their eyes and they are going to see the One whom they have pierced. They will shine as a light to a Gentile world. So, there is great encouragement. I started by saying that, and tying that in with chapter 1:13, that these were good words and comfortable words that the Lord was giving to Zechariah, giving to him in vision form, but teaching him and instructing him as to what these things mean and what encouragement they gave, not only in the short term but on into the future as well. God has not finished with them.

There was a work the Lord was going to complete among them. We too can be encouraged by God's Word. The Lord will complete His work. There is a work that He is going to do in each one of our lives. Paul said that the work that He had begun He would one day complete, perfected in the day of Jesus Christ. There is a work He is going to do among His ancient people some day. It is but a picture about what He is going to do in us. He is going to complete the work He has begun and He will do it for His glory and He will do it all by His grace.

## The Flying Roll and the Ephah

We turn to Zechariah 5, where we have a vision that has a change of tone from those which have gone before. We were thinking of the last of those this afternoon in chapter 4 with the candlestick, and there are other visions that are found in the opening chapters of the prophecy.

When we come to chapter 5 with the flying roll and the ephah, there is a considerable change of tone. From dwelling upon that ornate candlestick supplied by that wonderful reservoir of oil tapped from those two olive trees, we come to consider a curse that is going out upon the whole land, upon the whole earth. We turn from that which represents the presence of God in its fullness with the oil coming out of those two olive trees being poured into the people of God, to something which represents wickedness.

In verse 3 we read about a curse, and it is in connection with this flying roll. Then, in the second part of the chapter, beginning at verse 5, we read about the ephah; and in the midst of the ephah there is this description of wickedness that is to be found.

The obvious question to ask, as we work our way through the Book of Zechariah is, what is the connection between what we have here in chapter 5 and those good and comfortable words which have gone before? Why has the tone changed so much? Why have we moved away from that which is encouraging and comforting to the people of God to think about a curse and wickedness? What is the connecting thought?

Well, I take it that in these latter visions, the Lord is indicating that there are some things that have to come to pass before Christ will return in power and great glory, and those things are dark by nature. The Word of God elsewhere indicates that to us. In 2 Peter 1:19, it says, 'We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.' The coming of the Saviour the second time is likened to the dawn of a new day. That immediately causes us to think about the darkness of the night that goes just before. It is said that it is always darkest before the dawn. Well, that is going to be very true, spiritually speaking, when we think about the state of the world just prior to the coming of the Lord.

It is going to be a dark place. There are some dark things that are going to happen prior to the coming of the Lord. The Lord is indicating in these visions to Zechariah (and through Zechariah to the people of his day) that before these wonderful things that He has already been explaining in the former chapters – those 'comfortable' things (as they are described in chapter 1:13) – there are dark things that have to happen. That is what we are coming to think about, a curse and wickedness. I trust that as we do so, the Lord will give us insight into His Word and may the Word of God be opened up to our hearts by the power and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

### The Time of the Curse

The first four verses of chapter 5 deal with this time of the curse. This change of events is suggested to us in the opening verse, because we are told by Zechariah, 'Then I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a flying roll.' So as he was occupied in looking at the candlestick spoken of in the previous chapter, the prophet is

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caused to turn and lift up his eyes and see something foreboding – this flying roll.

As the word ‘flying’ suggests, it was moving. There was something that caught his attention. What he observed was dramatic so he turned from something that he was pondering which was of great encouragement to him, about the Holy Spirit being poured out in His fullness, to some more foreboding things. He beheld a flying roll. Notice what Zechariah saw and then consider the explanation given to him. The question was asked again of Zechariah, ‘What seest thou?’ He said a second time, ‘I see a flying roll,’ and the dimensions are given in verse 2. The length was 20 cubits and the breadth was 10 cubits.

So, he is made to consider this. We learn from the next verse (verse 3), that this roll is opened up. It would have been a scroll, which was the ancient way of having the Scriptures before they were put into book form. The Jews still have, in their synagogues, scrolls that they open up and find the place. That is the picture that is before us; and this scroll was opened up and Zechariah was able to read it on both sides – ‘on this side ... on that side.’ There is a message on it that is to be conveyed to those of Zechariah’s day; and down through time as well, because this is part of the inspired word.

There was a message that Zechariah was made to understand. The explanation begins in verse 3: ‘Then said He unto me.’ There is that point of application to us all just at this particular moment, that it is the Lord’s application of His truth that we need to find out.

We can read a portion and see particular things but the most important thing is to understand what the Lord is actually teaching. There may be application but that should not be confused with interpretation. What is the Lord teaching here? Well, He was telling Zechariah about ‘the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth.’

This word ‘curse’ is associated with those curses mentioned in the Book of Deuteronomy in connection with the law of God. For example, in Deuteronomy 28:15, ‘It shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee.’ Then, in the following verses you will find that the word ‘curse’ appears a number of times.

So there is a history to this. This reference in Zechariah is not the first time where this idea of a curse appears, but we can go back into earlier Old Testament times and realize it was mentioned before and it was to do with the breaking of God’s law. There is a curse that comes upon the people and upon the land spoken of in Deuteronomy 28 – and in other places also. It is the curse that is going to come upon those who forsake the Lord and turn away from Him. The curse that is to come upon the land of Israel is described in Deuteronomy, so Zechariah is not the first time that this subject is introduced to us.

We understand what the verse is saying by finding where it has been mentioned before. The same word has appeared in certain places and it is connected with disobedience to the Lord, forsaking the Lord, turning away from His Word; and there is going to be a curse that comes upon people and upon nations. That is certainly true of Israel. It is true of any nation that turns away from the Lord. Our own nation is no better and certainly ought to take heed to the pattern given to us in the Word of God that when a nation forgets the Lord, there is a consequence that will come upon that nation. We

have already begun to reap that harvest and it is not a pleasant harvest, and more and more people complain about the times in which we live.

The seeds that have been sown for years, and even decades, have resulted in a turning away from the Word of God, and now the harvest is being reaped. The spirit of the age, the attitude of people, rising crime and just the lack of manners in society is the harvest of departure from God. With it there comes an ever increasing tide of sin and wickedness and evil and even things that a in generation or two ago would never have been imagined are entertained today by society at large. There is a harvest to reap and that is a lesson that is worth remembering.

There is a connection with this curse in Zechariah 5. There is also something here about the standards by which society and the actions and conduct of men are going to be measured and that is the significance of the measurements given in verse 2. The 20 cubits and 10 cubits must have some significance, because if the Lord puts details into His Word, it is not just superfluous; it is not there to fill out a record. There has to be some reason, and we ask, where do these measurements appear before in the Scripture.

We follow that important principle of letting Scripture interpret Scripture, and there are only two other places in the Old Testament where you will read about 20 cubits and 10 cubits.

One of them is the dimensions of the holy place – not the holiest of all – but the holy place where the candlestick and altar of incense and the table of showbread were. If you work that out, it was 20 cubits by 10. The whole of the tabernacle was 30 cubits by 10. The holiest of all was 10 cubits by 10, but the part before the veil was 20 cubits by 10. So that is one of the places in the Word of God where we read about these dimensions. The only other place where those dimensions are found is again in reference to the house of God but this time in Solomon's temple. In 1 Kings 6:3. we read, 'The porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits was the length thereof ... and ten cubits was the breadth thereof.'

So, there are only two other places in all the Word of God where you come upon the 20 cubits and 10 cubits and it has to do with the house of God both times – the tabernacle and Solomon's temple. What is the suggestion here? Well, here is the standard that is going to be used to measure men's actions. It is not going to be a standard that man has devised. Man's standard is far off from God's standard. Man counts as righteous what God counts as sin. We know that there is a day coming when light will be taken for darkness and darkness for light, and we live in such times.

It is not going to be an earthly or a man-made standard. It is going to be God's standard of judgment that will determine where this curse will fall and who it will affect. It is God's old standard. He has not removed that standard. The standard of justice is going to be in keeping with His holiness which was manifested in both the tabernacle and Solomon's temple. God is a holy God and He has a standard. There will be no minimizing sin, no overlooking of sin, no excusing sin, no playing down of sin, no changing of sin. Sin will be what God has defined it to be. It is going to be an old standard. So, when we come to Zechariah 5:2 and ask what the significance is of these dimensions, we need to search where they are found elsewhere in Scripture. Then, we will be taken to God's house to think about God's standard. That is going to be the standard that will be used to judge where this curse will fall.



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We are also told about the cause of this curse. In verse 3, 'This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth; for everyone that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according to it, and everyone that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it.' Then at the beginning of verse 4, 'I will bring it forth, saith the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by My Name.' So, there is a further explanation of what is the cause of this curse. What brings it in the first place? It is a breaking of God's law, and it would seem that what is being referenced is both tables of the law, because the sins that are mentioned here are sins from each table of the law. Swearing falsely by the Lord's Name is a breaking of the third commandment, 'Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain.' While verse 3 gives the shorter definition of that – he that sweareth – verse 4 speaks more specifically of him that sweareth falsely by the Lord's Name. That is going to bring God's judgment. That is a sin on the first table of the law.

Then, him that stealeth is the other sin that is particularly mentioned in verse 3 and as we readily know that is a sin in the second table of the law.

So, the Lord is pointing to His ancient law and that is going to be the standard. He is highlighting the fact that both tables of the law have been broken and He is going to bring judgment upon men and women. There is a curse that is going to go across the face of the whole earth as it is described here, and it is because of sin. God will never justify sin no matter what man does. We live in days when things are being redefined and changed, and that old standard that God has given us in His Word is being altered.

At least, men think they can alter it and change it, dismiss it and set it aside, remove it entirely and give no credence to God's law at all, but they are going to discover it is that law which is going to be the standard by which men and women will be judged. That is going to be the standard of judgment, and there will be those who will be found guilty.

One writer suggested that one side of the roll contained judgments of God against transgressors of that first summary of the law, 'Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might;' and the other side of the flying scroll brings that condemnation upon those who transgress the other command, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' It is the same thought, two tables of the law, with sin against each table.

There is a sin breaking each one of these categories and they are on either side of this flying roll which is going across the face of the whole earth. This is going to be the cause of the judgment, and the people in our day and age would do well to remember God's standard still remains. Sadly, there is a growing generation that knows nothing of the things of the Lord or His Word; knows nothing of His law and what is required by it, but there is judgment coming; there is a curse that is going to go across the face of the whole earth. The Lord is showing Zechariah this has to happen before those good things can come about. There is going to be judgment.

Notice something else in verse 4, the extent that there is in this curse. It says, 'I will bring it forth, saith the LORD of hosts.' This is of the Lord. It is His doing. Then He says, 'It shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by My Name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house.' This is to be prolonged, and shall have a degree of seriousness to it. This is not something that will



be fleeting.

Then the last clause in verse 4 has the thought that this work will be consumed, or brought to a finish. The Lord God has a purpose in this. This is going to be God dealing with sin and even to the extent where He will purge the Holy Land. That will come about by the Lord purging sin out of that land. It is like any land marred and stained by sin, by its people turning away from the Lord and forgetting Him. The Lord is going to do a purging work and there will be a judgment to come involving certain individuals, those who have committed sin.

It says it is going to remain there, but it will consume, it will come to an end. Job asked the question, 'Who can contend with God and prosper?' Not one. Not a single soul can contend with God. That is why every mouth will be stopped, as the Scripture tells us, on that day when the Lord comes to judge. There are many individuals, in their arrogance, who think that they will argue with God or debate with God, but they will not speak a word. The Bible says, 'Every mouth will be stopped.' Such will be the over-aweing sense of God's holiness. There will not be a tongue that will speak.

The Lord is going to do a purging work that brings it to an end – the end of the sinner who has committed sin, and also the end of sin itself. He is going to purge the land. We go back to chapter 2:12. It says, 'The LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again.' So it is going to be a holy land. Chapter 8:3 was another verse we mentioned this afternoon where it says, 'I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts, the holy mountain.' How are these things going to come to pass? How is it going to be a holy land? How is it going to be a city of truth? It can only be so when the Lord has done a purging work and sent a curse, or a judgment upon men and women who have committed sin. By this means, He is going to purge that land and that people. To a certain degree, it will bring to an end sinners and sin. It will become a holy land.

You read there about the domain of it as well. It goes across the face of the earth. It is what the scripture tells us in verse 3. Sometimes the word 'earth' is in reference to the land of Israel itself. That may well be the reference here, because as we make our way towards the end of this chapter, there is a contrast with the land of Shinar. There is a land that the curse goes over and there is another land mentioned in the latter part of the chapter, the land of Shinar. So it may be that this is in reference to the land of Israel because it speaks about those who have sworn falsely by His Name. That would suggest it has to be His ancient people. It has to be a people who know His name. The Lord says they have sworn 'falsely by My Name.' So there are a people who take the Lord's name upon themselves.

There is going to be a purging of that land, a purging of that people. These were dark times the Lord was showing to Zechariah, but the Lord was saying that this has to come to pass before those better times come, those good times that are indicated in the earlier visions.

The flying roll suggests the swiftness of this curse as well. It is flying; moving at pace.

The Lord will do things suddenly. We are told in Scripture, that He 'shall suddenly come to His temple.' He will do things quickly as He did at times in the history of Israel. For example, as in the days of Hezekiah, when there was a great reformation and

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a turning to the Lord. In 2 Chronicles 29, there are details of what was done then and at the end of the chapter, we read, 'Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly.' God worked suddenly in the days of Hezekiah. It did not take a long time. That is suggested with the thought of the flying roll in Zechariah 5. When God begins to work, to purge, to bring this judgment or this curse upon the land and upon a people, He is going to do it suddenly.

### The Time of Wickedness

It is coming for sure. All who have sinned against Him and have not repented are going to meet a God coming in judgment. What an awful day that will be! Is it any wonder the New Testament tells us it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God? There will be those that will do just that – those who have rejected His mercy and rejected His Son. So, there is a curse that goes out upon the land in order to purge it.

The second part of this chapter, beginning there at verse 5, tells us something else that is dark and foreboding. There is this time of wickedness that is coming. That term appears in verse 8, 'This is wickedness.' Before Israel is to be restored, before they come to the fulfillment of these earlier visions that are found in the opening chapters of Zechariah, there is something else that has to happen. There is going to be a time of wickedness, and there are some details given to us in connection with that.

In verse 5, the prophet is again directed by the angel to lift up his eyes to see what is going forth. So here is something on the move. We have noticed the flying roll was on the move. The thought there of swiftness may well be the case again, especially when we come down a little further and think about these two women who had wings like those of a stork and they were lifted up from the earth. They 'lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven.' There may well be the thought of swiftness and speed at which something comes to pass.

Zechariah is called to take note of what is going forth, and this time it has to do with a spirit of wickedness that will manifest itself. It is finally going to be destroyed before Israel is restored. That spirit of wickedness can be equated with that spirit of lawlessness of which we read in 2 Thessalonians 2:8. It speaks there about the wicked or the wicked one (or the lawless one). The antichrist is going to be a lawless individual. There is going to be a spirit of lawlessness. It literally means 'without law.'

There is going to be a spirit where there is no recognition of God's law. Take the two here together as they are in this particular chapter. We have thought about judgment coming upon a people who take no regard for God's law. Then, in the second part of the chapter we find this spirit of wickedness is going to be manifested by that very attitude, without law.

We live in an age where that spirit is growing more and more, where people think they are a law unto themselves. The attitude of today is, 'I can do as I please. Nobody tells me what to do. I will not be constrained or restricted or told what to do.' That is a growing spirit among the people of this day. It is a spirit of lawlessness. What God says in His Word will come to pass exactly as He says.

Notice this spirit of wickedness is going to be embedded in the system of commerce. The ephah is a dry measure used by merchants for weighing out their goods. You read

about it almost thirty times in the Word of God. In Exodus 16:36, it tells us ‘an omer is the tenth part of an ephah.’ So here is a dry measure for goods and it is a symbol of commerce, a symbol of trade connected with this spirit of wickedness – the ephah, that goes forth (verse 6). It is suggested that it was moving.

It is true that antichrist’s kingdom will have a political dimension. We read about that in Daniel. The political aspect will be the reforming of the ten kingdoms of the Roman earth and they will be in existence as antichrist comes to the fore.

There is also going to be a religious dimension to the kingdom of antichrist. Revelation 17 and 18 refer to ‘Mystery Babylon,’ ‘the mother of harlots,’ ‘the cage of every unclean and hateful bird.’

However, what is particularly highlighted here is this commercial aspect. This spirit of commerce is going to be the spirit of wickedness that will be concealed for a time. Then it will eventually be brought to the fore. It says in verse 6, ‘This is their resemblance through all the earth,’ and the ephah is this resemblance. So, that which has all the resemblance of commerce and economic activity is going to be the driver, a considerable driver, of the kingdom of antichrist and bringing him to power and prominence.

For many centuries, Europe has been the commercial centre of the world. Even in recent times, there is that spirit of commerce; everything is framed in that context. Commerce, trade, economic activity, governs anything that is discussed or decided. All is weighed up in the balance of commerce. ‘Will it make money? Will it make us richer? Will it do us good economically? That is the language of today amongst those in authority. It is not a matter of saying, ‘Is this right in God’s eyes?’ That is not the spirit in those who are in authority today. The spirit of the age is going to be present ere the kingdom of antichrist is brought to the fore.

This spirit of wickedness is concealed in this ephah, as we read in verse 7, ‘Behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead: and this is a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah.’ There is this concealing. She wants to break out and manifest herself, but her time is not yet. It is concealed for a time and there is this talent of lead that is put upon the top of the ephah, which is going to conceal the true spirit that is there. The outward resemblance through all the earth is commerce and trade, but hidden under this there is going to be this spirit of wickedness, this woman that is in the ephah. This world does not dread the ephah. It welcomes it. It welcomes trade and commerce and economic activity because there is this thought, it is going to make us richer, it is going to make us better off. The more we have of this, the better. They have not yet come to dread the ephah. They will one day, when it is too late, but at present they do not.

They presently dread the sceptre, the sword, and the mitre, but this world has not yet come to dread the ephah. This is the semblance, the picture, the representation that is given to the world as it goes forth, as it develops, and all the time there is within this spirit of wickedness. There is this woman in the midst of the ephah with a lid kept on to conceal her and keep her there until the appointed time has come. Just follow through on the picture that is given to us because there comes a time when this ephah is going to move.

In verse 9, the prophet lifts up his eyes and beholds something of which he takes notice. ‘There came out two women, and the wind was in their wings; for they had

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wings like the wings of a stork: and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven.’ The prophet asked where they were going to take it. The answer is given in verse 11, ‘To build it an house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there.’ So, this spirit is going to be developing. This woman is already going to be in this evil system. This wickedness is going to be there, and then, at a time, it is going to be taken to the land of Shinar. Whatever those two women represent has to do with ungodliness and uncleanness.

The stork is an unclean bird. The Lord does not make any mistakes when he uses certain imagery and metaphors to describe what He is teaching us. He does not take a clean bird; He takes an unclean bird. He says they have wings like the wings of a stork.

Those wings are large, and with the wind in their wings, the thought is of the suddenness and speed with which this is going to happen. Those who facilitate and bring it about are going to have a spirit of uncleanness in them as an unclean bird. Everything about this is represented by uncleanness and wickedness. There will come a time when that woman in the ephah is going to be displayed to be the harlot of Revelation 17, admired by all, delighted in by all, giving the cup of joy and gladness to all the nations; but little do they know it is the wine of everlasting wrath. That is why it has been taken to the land of Shinar, for its final judgment.

The wind is often used in the scriptures to speak of judgment. For example, in Numbers 11:31, it says, ‘There went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp.’ If you read on, it tells that while the flesh was ‘between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague’ (verse 33). The wind is associated with judgment.

So, what is the Lord saying through Zechariah as he looks and sees the ephah taken up by these two women, with wings like a stork, and being taken swiftly, with the wind being involved? It is the thought of judgment. It is being taken for judgment. It is going to be transported back to its base, back to its originating point, back to where that spirit of rebellion against God commenced.

In Genesis 10:9, we read about the mighty hunter Nimrod, and the land of Shinar is specifically mentioned. Surely there has to be a connection in the prophecy of Zechariah 5, with its mention of the land of Shinar. Then, in chapter 11, the spirit of lawlessness was evident at the Tower of Babel. The Lord later made them to disperse from the land of Shinar. They had dwelt there and were intending to build their tower.

Sometimes, Bible storybooks for children depict this building going up into the clouds, but it did not physically reach heaven. That is not what it says in this portion. That is a misreading of the Scripture. Men were looking at it as an alternative way to God. It was a tower of worship, of false religion, and has all the marks of departure from God and defiance of the Lord. The Lord judged those that were involved and scattered them. There is going to be a repeat of that, and that is the picture presented to us in Zechariah 5. This wickedness, this ephah, is going to be transferred to the land of Shinar, going back to where it all started, with the purpose of it being judged.

That brings us to Revelation 18, where we read of the judgment that will come upon Babylon. The ephah has been taken back. The woman has been revealed in all her wickedness (chapter 17). She is the mother of harlots. The spirit has brought antichrist

to the fore. He will turn against and devour and destroy that woman on which he rides, and he will declare himself to be the object of worship. In Revelation 18, the city of Babylon is restored, and that whole chapter is about commerce and merchantmen and trading. This is what the ephah it is all about.

The theme is enlarged and developed in the Book of the Revelation. It was in type and shadow and picture form in Zechariah but in the Revelation it is described in its fullness. There is a whole chapter that tells us about this city, and the trading that will be centred in Babylon. Remember, the ephah is back in the land of Shinar for judgment. God has brought it back there to judge it, and in Revelation 18, the Lord explains the great conclusion. Verses 1-3 read, 'After these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all the nations have drunk the wine of the wrath of her fornication.'

The nations have been taken in with the semblance of the ephah, the trade, the commerce. They have never had any cause to be alarmed. They thought it was all for their good, and all the time they did not know they were just drinking the wine of the wrath of judgment.

We cannot go through this chapter section by section, but just look at some of the verses.

Verse 10, 'Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.' We have already thought about God doing things suddenly. He is going to bring sudden judgment upon that city. The ephah brought back to the land of Shinar, where Babylon is, with a purpose of judgment. That is the particular point to notice with reference to the wind in Zechariah 5 – brought back for judgment.

Verses 16-17, 'Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! for in one hour so great riches is come to naught.' Again, sudden judgment, and the cry goes up as in verse 18, 'And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!'

I finish with verse 20 because here is the response of God's people. 'Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.' It will be a day of sadness for the nations of the earth and for the merchants and the great men with this city that represented all their hopes brought down in an hour; but God's people will rejoice because Christ is coming. It is the harbinger for Christ to return as He comes and brings down that city in judgment.

So if we think about Zechariah 5 and the fact that the prophet was told that these things have to take place, dark and foreboding as they are – curse, wickedness, but all necessary in order to bring about the coming of Christ. We can take heart. The Lord is coming.